

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION

No. 149.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1854.

Price 1d.
STAMPED 2d.



PAUL INJURED BY THE OVERTURNING OF THE CARRIAGE.

THE KNIFE-GRINDER'S SON.

[FROM THE GERMAN.]

CHAPTER V.

With a drooping head I wandered till the road divided. How now sprang merrily forward, and
No. 149, 1854.

I followed without thinking. What did it matter which way I went? I looked up to heaven and said, "Lord, teach me to do thy will! Let thy good Spirit guide me in a plain path." This prayer to the Father of the orphan

Y Y

and the Comforter of the poor strengthened me.

The country on this side of the town was new to me, and was exceedingly beautiful; laughter and song, too, were heard on all sides from the mowers and haymakers. I had tasted nothing since my early breakfast, and I had long been out of the habit of running. Heat and fatigue were overcoming me when the noonday bell sounded in a distant valley, and the labourers sat down to eat their dinners. Shame kept me from begging; but I seated myself by the side of the road and watched them. One of the mowers seemed to understand my melancholy starving look, while Hownow, less scrupulous than I, was enjoying some scraps thrown to him.

"Youngster," said he, "I suppose you and the dog are much alike. Are you hungry?"

"Indeed I am," I answered in a low voice.

"Come here, then; you shall have something, too." I sprang up, and fell to: all looked compassionately at me. "I suppose yesterday was fast day with you," said one.

"Every day has been that with me." And then I told them how it had lately fared with me.

"You have done for yourself there," said the first man. "Where will you go?"

I could only answer that I did not know.

"Poor little fellow!" said the man, and he cut me off a piece of bread as large as what I got at Ruppel's in a whole week. "Good bye now, and I say try and get a place."

I left them with hearty thanks, and wandered on through one village, and still onward, when the sun sank, and my limbs refused to go further; and Hownow, too, hung his head down, and crept wearily after me. Seeing no chance of a bed, I turned into a field, and bathed in a little river which rippled invitingly by my side. This greatly refreshed me and Hownow, who followed my example. I then, by the moonlight, divided the bread into four portions, took one for myself, gave Hownow his share, laid the rest by till morning, and choosing a haycock we both crept under it. I prayed earnestly and aloud, and my eyes were soon closed in most peaceful slumber. He who falls asleep in pious trust that he is in God's keeping, sleeps well. As soon as the sun's first rays gilded the landscape, Hownow and I crept out of our hole. I set the haycock in order, stretched my limbs, and then prayed in the words of the noble hymn:—

"Let my first thought be praise and prayer—
His mercies I extol;
The Lord thy grateful song will hear—
Sing praise to him, my soul!"

I felt very happy, and, dividing my breakfast with Hownow, I returned to the high road. The aimless, unfettered, wandering life on which I was again entering brought back the feelings of my early days; and as now I had no barrow to draw, or blows to dread, I gave myself up with boyish thoughtlessness to the full enjoyment of the present, unconcerned about the future.

It was midday before I reached a village. To beg I felt ashamed, and I resolved to seek some service, but it never occurred to me that I might fail; and when on the first cheerful inquiry at a house for work, the question came, "What work

can a little fellow like you do?" I answered boldly, "Any thing you will give me to do." The woman laughed and said, "You have a very good opinion of yourself. Be off; we don't want a little-boy-like you, who can do nothing but eat." I stood astounded. She gave me a big piece of bread, and said, "Now be off."

This was like a thunderbolt; the whole edifice of my hopes was destroyed. Bowed down, I crept on, but experienced the same fate at two or three other houses. With scalding tears streaming from my eyes I reached the end of the village. There a peasant tried to persuade me to part with Hownow, and called me names for refusing, though I was starving. I wandered on into the country again. The sun was scorching, and weighed down as I was with sorrow, I felt dreadfully tired. I seated myself by the road-side under a tree, for a storm was coming on. A carriage came along the road, and filled me with envious feelings. "How happy," thought I, "a rich man must be; when it rains, he can sit in his carriage, while I am exposed to the storm."

A gentleman about fifty, and a girl of my own age, were in the carriage. As it came up to where I sat, the gentleman looked at me—my eyes were most likely still red—and said kindly, "What is the matter, my boy? Are you tired?" I answered piteously that I had been running since day-break. "That is a long time. Well, get in here. That will rest you, and help you out."

The coachman made a sour face, but what did that signify? I got in, and the carriage rolled swiftly down the hill towards a wood. This was grand; we went as if we were flying. It began to thunder very loud, but only a few drops of rain fell. When we had scarcely reached the middle of the wood a flash of lightning shot across us, and a frightful cracking peal of thunder followed immediately. The horses were frightened, and tore along like mad creatures, and the coachman lost all control over them. A piercing shriek broke from the carriage, and, in a moment, it lay in the ditch at the road-side. It was thrown upon the bank with such force that I was stunned, but it could not have been fatal long time. When I came to myself, I felt something warm trickling down my face, and found it was blood from a gash all across my forehead. I wiped it, and looked round and saw the gentleman sitting under a tree, holding his arm and moaning. The coachman complained of his hip. The carriage was not injured, and the little girl was unhurt. She came up to me to look at me. "Poor boy," said the gentleman, who was much hurt, "I intended to do you a kindness, but it has turned out otherwise." I raised myself up, and looked for the means of washing off the blood; but when I had returned from a neighbouring spring, the wound still bled fast, and I did not know how to stop it. The kind young lady now came and bound my head up with a handkerchief which she wore round her neck. In the meantime, some people had come up and assisted in getting the carriage out of the ditch, and advised that we should all return to the village, where there was a clever surgeon, which was good news to the gentleman, who suffered exceedingly, though he tried to conceal this. He kindly urged me to go with them; but, though

much inclined, I had resolved not to return to that village, so I remained, and they went back. The storm had spent itself in the last violent burst; the sky was clear, but the forest was gloomy, and I hastened on to reach the open ground. In about a quarter of an hour I came to a part of the forest where the foliage was less dense, and heard the lively stirring sound of a herdsman's horn. The feeling of anxiety which I had experienced in the silent dark forest gave place to joy at being again in the neighbourhood of men, and Hownow seemed to share my feelings. I soon left the wood; and before me, in the golden tints of the setting sun, lay a beautiful landscape. A chain of hills formed a link between a mountain and plains covered with rich corn-fields, while behind me rose the dark wood from which I had just emerged. Everything was gilded by the sun, and my heart was soothed by the sight. I looked up to the blue heaven above, full of hope that I should yet find the means of honest subsistence.

The fulfilment of my wish was nearer than I thought. I was so fatigued that I felt as if I could scarcely creep on. When I had quite passed the underwood which skirted the forest, there lay before me a wide expanse of country covered with golden heath in full flower, and on patches of grass, seated here and there, were separate groups of the various animals composing the herd, cows and steers, goats and swine. An old herdsman was leaning against the trunk of a solitary birch tree. Hownow set up a loud bark. This attracted the herdsman's notice to the dog; and after looking attentively at him, he called him, but Hownow obeyed no stranger's call. He then perceived me. "You look very tired," said he, goodnaturedly. "Are you very hungry?" Without waiting for an answer, he offered me a piece of bread, which I immediately shared with Hownow, and showed practically how much we needed the food.

"I say, is that dog yours?" "Yes." "Will you sell him?" "No," replied I, emphatically; "where I go, he goes, and where he goes, I go."

"Ho!" said the old man, and drew his rough hand over his face. "I say," said he, after a short pause, "do you live near here?"

"I come from a good way off," I replied.

Another pause. "I say, have you any one belonging to you?" "I am alone in the world," I answered, "and am trying to find work." His countenance brightened up, and he said, "For yourself and your dog?" "Yes." "Whoever takes you into his service, takes your dog too?" "Yes, as long as I stay."

"Well, my lad, my dog happens to be good for nothing; or, to tell the truth, the forester shot him because he was a poacher, and sometimes went a hunting. Now as I am without a dog, I could find work for a helper like you; for I have to mind both the knavish goats and the troublesome pigs, which is a piece of work beyond my old worn-out knees, which won't stand much running. I think you and your dog may as well stop with me. I'll give you food and a pair of shoes. The peasants will give you clothes if you take good care of their cattle."

This was not a time for hesitation, so I consented.

"Well," said the man, "you shall stop with me. The village bell will soon ring; we will then go home, and if my wife agrees to it, it shall be as I have said." "For how long?" I asked. "We will see about that. If you behave well, and your dog is what I take him to be, you may stop as long as you like; but we'll try first. Now blow the horn."

I did so, and the sound rang through the neighbourhood and was echoed back again.

"That will do. I expect you will make a good herdsman. Try now how you can get on with the herd." He gave me the whip.

"Look, there goes the bull into the clover field; drive him back." I ran as fast as I could, and made the powerful animal feel the taste of the whip on his nose, as I had often seen done in former times. The beast rattled the chain which he wore on his neck, itself a token of his fierceness, lowered his head and rushed towards me. Hownow saw this and flew at him, and I, nothing daunted, gave him more heavy blows. He bellowed fearfully, but turned round and went back to the herd. I looked round and saw a great brown goat mounted on the top of a hedge. At a signal from me, Hownow flew at it and brought it back too.

When I returned, the old man smiled complacently. "I say, youngster, you have done capitally, and I see very well that you and your dog are both worth having. One would think you had both been brought up to it. If you go on like this I will give you a frock, and, in the autumn, when I get my money for the herd, you shall have something to put into your pocket."

This exceeded all my hopes. I would gladly have served for my food alone. The old man often repeated, "Provided my wife agrees to it." This made me guess that she was both master and mistress too, and a strict disciplinarian. I held such women in great awe, for opposite to Gerstenmeier's house lived a poor little tailor, thin and lean, like his own thread and needle, who had a wife that ruled the roost; and I once saw her give the poor little fellow a hearty box on the ear. The fear that the herdsman's wife might be like her was a great weight on my mind; but I had not much time for thinking, for the evening bell rang, and the old man cried, "Forward." I was told to go before the herd, and he followed.

We had a long way to go to the entrance of the village. On reaching it I stepped on one side, and the animals ran grunting, bleating, and bellowing to their sheds. At each house came the same question, "Why, Hannes, where did you get that smart lad and that dog?"

"He is a poor orphan," said he, evading the question. "See if you can give him some clothing; the wind gets through everything he has on."

"Let him look in in the morning," said several, very good-naturedly, to my great delight, for I needed much this kindness.

At last we approached the herdsman's dwelling, which was at the farther end of the village, and it was such a poor tumble-down hovel that I sighed involuntarily. In the doorway stood a stout masculine-looking woman, with her arms a-kimbo, looking so pugilistic that I sighed again.

"What's that you have got with you, Hannes?"

cried she, in a tone which did not sound over friendly. "What sort of a vagabond have you picked up now? He looks as if he had been over half the world."

The blood mounted to my cheeks, shame and anger striving for the mastery. "Now we shall catch it," muttered Hannes. He plucked up courage, and said aloud, "Rich men don't send their sons to us. If you want a boy, you must take this one."

"What are you thinking of?" said she, in a rage. "What are we to do with him? Times are bad, bread dear, and we can scarcely get enough to put into our own mouths."

"Haven't you said a hundred times," exclaimed he, angrily, "that I must get a helper, or else the villagers will not give me the care of the herd any longer. And now I have one you grumble."

She was just beginning a bitter reply when she perceived the dog, and her countenance cleared.

"I say," she remarked, "the king has not such a dog as that! Where did you get him? What did he cost?" "Nothing!" replied her husband, triumphantly.

"Nothing! You speak like a fool, husband," exclaimed she, angrily. "No one would give away such a dog as that."

"People ought to hear before they find fault. I say the dog belongs to the boy, and comes into the bargain. He is a dog fit for the king, and has shown to-day what he can do; and I say a better helper could not be got anywhere." Hannes then related the whole history of his meeting me.

"Oh, well," said she, when her husband had concluded, "he may stop."

While this conversation was going on, I was standing at the corner of the house, and my condition was not enviable. "Come," said Hannes; and we both entered the hut, which consisted of one small room, a little kitchen, and a loft which was reached by a ladder. Oh how wretched everything looked. Disorder and dirt everywhere; and all so small that one could scarcely turn round. Happily, however, there were no children. The meal of curds and potatoes which was standing ready seemed to me a royal feast, but the accompaniments were not pleasant, as the whole history of my day's misfortunes was insultingly criticised. I was very weary, and would fain have laid down; but prayer or rest were not yet for me. I was ordered to draw water, clean out the goat-shed (which had not been done for a week, and was consequently hard work), and then to break potatoes into the water in which the plates had been rinsed for Hownow's supper. Happily the old man heard this, and ordered her to pour in some milk, as a good dog ought to have good food. She obeyed, but very angrily. Hannes himself prepared a bed for Hownow, and called him to lie down in it. "He won't do that," said I; "he is used to sleep by my side."

"But how will you get him up the ladder?" asked the woman.

"I will carry him up in my arms. But will you be so good as to give me a little oil and a bit of rag? the wound on my forehead pains me very much." She did this for me, but evidently disbelieved my statement about how I got it, and endeavoured to exchange the silk handkerchief for a

cotton one of her own. But to me it was a pleasing relic, which I would not have parted with for any consideration.

"Oh, you won't let it go," she muttered; "get up the ladder."

I took Hownow under my arm, and after I had wished them good night, ascended the ladder, which was taken away as soon as I was up. The loft was dark and small, but there was fresh hay in it, and we soon made ourselves a little nest. I was so tired that I fell asleep while repeating my evening prayer, and awoke only when a voice below cried, "Paul, get up, it is high time." The day was scarcely dawning, and I was bid to light the fire, but while I was doing this I heard, through the half opened door, the following conversation.

"You are most foolish to promise him a frock, shoes, and pocket-money. He would have come for his food only. What shall we do with him in the winter, when the herds stay at home and we have to feed him? You can keep him till Martinmas, and then turn him off."

"But the dog?" said Hannes.

"We must pet him that he may like to stay with us," answered the wife.

"I say, you began very well yesterday with the dog's food, eh!"

"Hold your tongue," she bawled out, "I know what I'm about; he must not sleep any more with that boy. He shall sleep with us in our room. Besides, I will sometimes keep him at home."

I was shocked at the woman's dishonesty; but still I could not help laughing at it, as I knew all their efforts would be useless.

After we had breakfasted I went through the village, blowing the horn. The people were very kind to me. At one house I got a piece of bread and cheese, at another a pair of old shoes and an old coat. In short, I was very successful, and the food was very acceptable, as the herdwife cut me very small slices.

That day everything went well with the cattle. Hownow showed he had the right blood in his veins; but the labour was not small. It was so difficult to keep in order the snouted cattle, as Hannes called the pigs, and the nimble goats were always ready to trespass. I was obliged to be continually running, hunting, and looking on all sides, while old Hannes stretched himself at his ease on the ground and smoked his pipe, or else gave orders and went to sleep. I was very tired by the evening, but rest was not to be thought of. Tying up the goats, drawing water, running round the village with the tallies and fetching the bread was all my work.

At night, when I had taken up Hownow and was about to mount the ladder, the herdwife called out, "Hollo! that won't do, the dog spoils the hay; I have made him a bed in the room."

I set him down, laughing to myself, and ascended the ladder alone; but you should have seen the agony of the faithful creature; he sprang upon the ladder, barked, and would not be pacified. The woman called him, Hannes called him; it was of no use. She then tried to lay hold of him, but though in general a lover of peace, Hownow bristled his hair fiercely, showed his teeth, and snarled so disagreeably that she retreated scolding. I went down, and at length persuaded him

to lie still; but when I turned away, he sprang up wildly, dashed out of the door, and stood whimpering on the ladder. "Take him with you then," said the termagant, and banged the door behind me. How happy Hownow was when I took him up with me! How lovingly he fawned upon me, and what good this affection did me, and how the poor dumb animal's fidelity put to shame the faithless people who wished to separate us!

Unkind as the herdwife was at first, she grew much more so when she found how futile were all her efforts to detach the dog from me. I bore all in patience, as I was no longer eating the bread of idleness. It was, however, a dismal prospect that I was to be turned out in the winter. Several times the woman shut up Hownow, and would not let him go. This was bitter indeed; but one day in September, when Hannes was ill, she tried this, and the powers of darkness seemed let loose. I answered, I am sorry to say, very angrily, and at length Hannes interfered in my behalf. He himself let the dog out, but anger was boiling within me. I drove out the herd, my ill humour increasing at every step. The cattle had never been so unmanageable; it seemed as if they would provoke me to the utmost. The pigs got into a potato field and injured themselves; and as the herdsman had to pay for any damage occasioned or sustained by the cattle, I should never dare to return home if any harm happened to them.

The next morning the herdsman was obliged to keep his bed, and his wicked wife actually shut the dog up again, but out of consideration for the sick man I suppressed my anger and took the herd out. The pigs again broke into the potato field. In a great rage I threw the thick iron-bound stick at them, a thing Hannes had often warned me against. Ah! how little we think of the consequences that may follow from one false step. Unluckily the weapon had struck a pig, which fell down. I rushed up to it and found it dead! My rage was gone, but indescribable anguish seized me. What was to be done? I could not pay for the animal. Then, in addition to all this, was added the conviction that I had allowed myself to be carried away by passion. I stood like a statue. At length an idea glimmered across the darkness of my mind. I must be off as fast as my legs will carry me. This was wrong; for at all risks I should have remained and confessed my fault. I threw away my herdsman's wallet and stick, and left the herd to take care of itself, and ran off as fast I could. How far I ran I know not, but it was in a part of the country unknown to me that I stopped, breathless, at the entrance of a wood; no village was in sight, and I laid myself down in a field of uncut oats. It would be fruitless to attempt to describe my state of mind. Now, when the starry canopy shone above me, I first perceived that my second error had been worse than the first; I had left the herd without any one to take care of them. What mischief they might get into! I closed my eyes because I did not venture to look up to heaven, and dared not to pray. I thought only of my own fault; that of the herdwife seemed small in comparison. And my Hownow, the only thing that loved me or that I loved, was separated from me.

NOVEMBER IN CANADA.

DURING the early part of November, immediately before the setting in of the Canadian winter, a grateful interval occurs of brief duration, which has received the name of the Indian summer from its agreeableness to the senses. A delightful warmth is then diffused through the air in open situations, though in the depth of woods, and other close localities, the weather is occasionally oppressive. There is, however, a general dimness in the atmosphere, and the face of nature is covered by a thin and beautiful haze. Morning and evening the sun looks red, as the blue rays are lost in traversing a great thickness of the obscured medium, while the red rays, having a greater momentum, force a passage through it, and are received by the eye. The clouds that hang aloft in smoky volumes with fantastic shapes are tinged with saffron and pale crimson light, appearing like the clouds over London at the dawn or close of a warm sultry day, when such hues are commonly reflected by the overhanging masses of vapour. Not a breeze ruffles the surface of the waters, waves a blade upon the ground, or moves a leaf of the forest. Such are the ordinary phenomena. But sometimes the haze is much more dense and palpable, approximating to the darkness of a metropolitan fog.

While quartered at Montreal, about twenty years ago, Major Stack witnessed one of the "dark days" in question. The morning set in fine and calm. In a few hours the sky became overcast, and threatened rain or wet mist, though none fell. About twelve o'clock the sun had the appearance as if looked at through red glass, and darkness came on. By one the fiery orb was no longer visible, and the darkness became more decided. It was impossible to read in the houses, and candles were obliged to be lighted. About two o'clock the gloom was as total as that of a dark night in England. Objects were not to be seen at the distance of two or three yards; drivers in the streets were running against each other; and nervous people gave way to indefinite alarms. Very old Canadians remarked that it was one of their "dark days," though they had not seen an example so complete since they were boys. After the total obscuration had continued upwards of an hour, it began to clear away as gradually as it came on, till business avocations were resumed as usual, candles were extinguished in the mess room, and Montreal was itself again. It was soon ascertained, by reports from distant quarters, that this extraordinary noontide darkness had prevailed over some thousand square miles of land and lakes.

Among the causes assigned for this phenomenon, the opinion was at first most prevalent that it was smoke from some of the far-west prairies, the long grass of which might have been burning. But this was speedily disproved, for the hunters who run the wild buffalo on the plains saw no traces of such a vast fire in their excursions, and it was impossible that the grass could have grown again in so short a time had such a fire taken place. The general haze of the atmosphere at this season has likewise been attributed to the conflagration of forests by the Indians inhabiting the

countries northward of the great lakes. But the ordinary dimness is more or less an annual occurrence, and cannot therefore be explained by accidental causes; nor would North America be at present clothed with such vast tracts of wood had they been subject to periodical havoc upon a scale so extensive. In the instance of such conflagrations, the illumination is seen over immense spaces; the smoke has a well-defined drift determined by the winds, and the countries are sufficiently explored to render some information of the event certain. Besides, the period of the year is that when the firing of the trees and grasses is not likely to spread freely, owing to the humidity of the ground from the autumnal rains. Nature's chemistry doubtless offers the true explanation both of usual and extraordinary appearances. The fermentation in process, of an immense mass of vegetable matter shed by the forests, which is undergoing decomposition in the latter part of October and beginning of November, is probably intimately connected with the peculiar warmth and misty aspect then observed in the air. Hence it is supposed that a great alteration will be effected in the season, as clearing the land continues to diminish the quantity of decaying vegetation; and old settlers have noticed a change already, the characteristics of the interval not being so decided as formerly. In addition to this, as the brief season begins to close, all the waters, so immensely abundant in the region, undergo the process of conversion into a solid form, giving out in large quantities the calorific which has held them in a state of fluidity; and heat thus developed naturally occasions a thin mist, a common spectacle over the surface of a newly frozen stream. These causes, in their ordinary operation, and acting with intense effect under a peculiar combination of circumstances, appear adequate to explain the hazy and dark days of North America, though there may have been at particular times other agencies at work, for the present to us occult and recondite.

After an interval of perfect stagnation, the condition of the atmosphere is often changed by a hurricane of wind and snow, which comes on without the slightest previous warning. The backwoodsman in the silence and solitude of the forest suddenly hears a distant hollow rushing sound. It is the voice of the blast, the tone of which increases every moment, while the surrounding air is still perfectly calm. On looking up, visible evidence of disturbance is added to the audible, the clouds, hitherto so motionless, drifting in several different directions with great rapidity. A dense gloom overspreads the heavens, the thundering shock of falling trees, the rending of branches from the pines, and the rush of the whirlwind become more distinct, till it sweeps by, darkening the air with scattered boughs and blinding snow. The forest now loses entirely its foliage; not a leaf remains aloft; the decayed timber is prostrate; and many a giant of the woodlands, still hale, but with exposed roots, is laid low, after standing the shocks of a century. The storm comes from the frozen shores of Hudson's Bay and Labrador. It brings to a close the brief reign of the Indian summer. Afterwards the atmosphere clears, the sky becomes beautifully

serene, and of a bright azure hue, while intense frost commences. The small rivers are soon completely frozen over; ice shuts up the bays and inlets of the great lakes, extending many miles towards their centre; vast icicles depend from the cliffs around the Niagara falls; snow covers deeply the entire surface, hardened into a solid pavement by the cold, and winter is for the time lord paramount of the country.

A SUMMER'S SOJOURN IN JERSEY.

It was just at the dawn of a glorious summer's morning that we first approached the shores of Jersey, and found ourselves in a short space of time casting anchor in the harbour of St. Helier. We could see the beautiful daylight waxing purer and brighter, till range after range of crimson clouds arose, and bank above bank of the fresh green woods expanded, softly glittering in their far-spread magnificence! Another day was granted to mortal life, visible in the divine colouring so lavishly spread on all around; and broad awake seemed the whole joyful world, as we sat on the deck of the vessel lost in contemplation of the scene before us.

We had the good fortune to arrive at high water; and no one, under such circumstances, can sail round the point, and stretch across the mouth of St. Aubin's bay towards the harbour of St. Helier, without the most lively admiration of the view. Most of the elements of the beautiful are there. There is the wide-spreading bay, stretching in a fine bend of many miles, its sloping shores charmingly adorned with woods and cultivated fields, and thickly dotted with ornamental villas and cottages. On the left, as you enter the harbour, is the grey and imposing fortress known by the name of Elizabeth's castle, built on a commanding time-worn rock almost surrounded by the sea; while in front is seen the town, backed by an extensive range of wooded and cultivated heights now in all their summer luxuriance.

Little is seen of the town of St. Helier on first entering the harbour, or in making your way to any of the hotels. Almost the first thing that struck us on landing was the air of prosperity everywhere visible. Public works were in rapid progress on all sides; while there were no empty shops or houses, no beggars, nor even any appearance of poverty or distress. The contrast is very great in this respect, when one compares St. Helier with any town of a similar size in England. The same impression continues in full force if you extend your walks into the environs. This absence of distress arises, we imagine, chiefly from the unusual fertility of the soil, and also in some measure from the abundance of employment always to be met with.

St. Helier lies fronting the sea, and is backed by a range of hills not rising immediately behind it, but at the distance of more than a mile and a half inland, and the whole of this intermediate space is occupied by villas and cottage residences, with their gardens and orchards. We were assured that nothing could be imagined to surpass the beauty of this country when the fruit-trees were in blossom,

it being at that vernal season a perfect scene of enchantment. The orchards adorn the slopes and crown the eminences, and the luxuriant foliage of their trees and shrubs, and their picturesque vine-ries, add much to the general richness and brightness of the landscape.

One of our first visits was paid to the market-place, which we rank decidedly first among the many markets that we have seen, as regards the display of vegetables, fruits, and flowers. A most agreeable and captivating sight it was to go there in the early morning, before the freshness was exhaled by the heat and glare of the day, and when all its tempting wares were displayed in the manner best calculated to set off their respective attractions. The profusion of what in England would be reckoned rare greenhouse flowers was very striking, and added a charm to one's life in Jersey; for you are enabled at a comparatively very small cost to surround yourself with as brilliant an array of sweet-scented and many-coloured blossoms as if you rejoiced in a well-kept and expensive greenhouse of your own. Most of the ladies at St. Helier go to market themselves. When the business of the day is partly over, the market-place changes its character, and becomes a scene of amusement; and many an agreeable hour have we lounged away there, watching all that was going on.

The Royal square is the very general resort of all the male population. There are to be found all the best booksellers' shops, the reading-rooms, and newspaper offices. The court-house and principal church are also situated in this square, as also the best hotel; and as all the chief thoroughfares of the town communicate with it, it may readily be imagined how thronged from morning till night is that particular square. A square it is not, according to our notions of the word, for there is not a tree, a shrub, or a blade of grass to be seen; it is only an open flat space, flagged in the centre with broad paving-stones. Some of the streets are pretty and well-built; the two best being the terrace and the crescent, inhabited chiefly by English. In the latter a theatre is situated—rather a striking building, with a Grecian portico—which forms an agreeable relief to the general plainness of the buildings; for the traveller must not expect to find much architectural beauty in the public edifices of Jersey. The old parish church of St. Helier may attract a passing glance, if circumstances should so far favour the wanderer as to allow him to see it, as we first did, with the gorgeous light of a beautiful sunset thrown all around it, mellowing its time-worn tints into one harmonious whole. In the interior there is a monument to the memory of Major Rivson, who fell when the French attacked the island in 1781.

The magnificent bay of St. Aubin stretches in a fine curve to the opposite village, from whence it derives its name, and the finest view of the bay can be obtained as you walk to Fort Regent. The ever-varying scene, as you ascend the hill, is as beautiful in its way as anything one can imagine. The little village of St. Aubin, for it scarcely deserves the name of a town, is half hidden amongst most luxuriantly-wooded heights. The day when we first made the excursion was calm and serene;

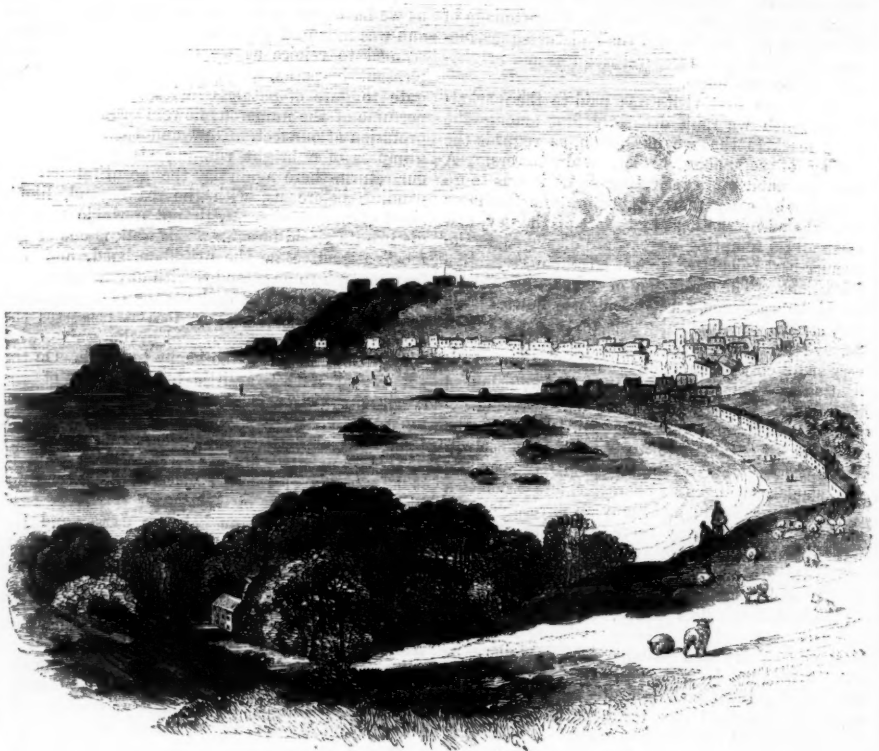
not a cloud was to be seen in all the deep blue sky, and the atmosphere was nearly as transparent as we have seen it in more southern climes. The sun was mounted high in heaven, and all nature seemed to rejoice as we slowly wandered along pleasant by-paths, where never dust lay, or from gate to gate of pathless inclosures, inhaling the perfume of the numerous flowers growing in such profusion at our feet. Now and then we caught glimpses of a bright running stream; while on our return, there again lay the beautiful bay expanding before us, with the sea beyond, like a sheet of molten silver, with not a ripple even to disturb its placid bosom. This walk is one of the most attractive in the neighbourhood, and not long enough to be attended with any fatigue.

Elizabeth castle is well worthy of a visit, and to the curious in legendary lore it possesses the attraction of a tradition, which the guide, with very little pressing, is too happy to relate. On the summit of a rock a little to the south of the castle the visitor is shown the rude remains of a hermitage, said to have been the last retreat of the principal hero of the legend. The castle is not usually visited, but we recommend a walk to it on account of the fine views that will be obtained in the course of it.

The trade carried on between Jersey and the nearest villages of the French coast is constant, especially during the fruit and game season. Rows of Norman peasant women, in their enormous pyramidal caps, may always be seen seated outside the market-place, with their capons, partridges, hares, and woodcocks.

The mention of these women leads us naturally enough to the subject of provisions generally. The meat-market is almost entirely supplied from France, and the average price of all butcher's meat may be stated at 6d. per pound of 17½ oz. Pork is excellent, superior to any we have ever tasted in England; in general, the other meats are not equal to our first-rate supplies. The poultry-market is well supplied, especially with geese. Fowls are about 2s. 6d. a couple; a well-sized turkey from 3s. to 5s.; a goose 2s. 6d., and ducks about 1s. 6d. a pair. Jersey butter is excellent. The average price during the summer months may be stated at 10d., during the rest of the year 3d. higher; eggs in summer sell at 5d. a dozen, in winter 7d. All these prices are calculated in Jersey currency, which varies somewhat from our own; for an English shilling represents thirteen pence in Jersey. If one purchases a pound of meat at 6½d. the 6½d. is paid by an English sixpence.

During the winter season there is a separate poultry-market wholly supplied from France. The vegetable and fruit-market is varied and abundant. The price of vegetables we should say is, on the whole, rather lower than in the best-supplied English markets. In the fruit-market are found many fruits belonging to more southern climates: good grapes are sold at 6d. a pound, and the finest hot-house grapes not more than 1s.; melons of the finest sorts are here bought for 8d. to 1s. 6d. So far it will be seen that Jersey has not any great advantage over the more abundant English counties; but it is to exciseable commodities we must look for the superiority that



VIEW OF ST. HELIER'S BAY, JERSEY.

Jersey possesses in point of cheapness, although this difference has been much diminished of late years by the great reduction in our tariff duties. In dried fruits, spices, oil, and all articles of that sort, as well as in all wines and spirituous liquors, Jersey has still a considerable advantage. This fact, joined to the salubrity of the climate, the great beauty of the country, and its nearness to England in these days of steam-boats, renders it a most charming and desirable residence for those who are obliged to consider economy in their choice of an abode. But even putting the question of a residence out of sight, we know no more delightful mode of spending the summer months than by devoting them to a tour in the channel islands.

There is, as we have observed, great beauty in the general aspect of this island; and so thickly is the country wooded, that, taking a bird's-eye view of it, it seems as if you are gazing at an extensive wood. The scenery nowhere can be called sublime or imposing; but to the admirers of a soft and rich style of beauty in landscape there is much to gratify their taste.

To carry out our country rambles effectually, we were put in possession of the very perfection of a pony; which for these sort of half-riding, half-walking excursions is almost indispensable, if the sojourner wishes properly to enjoy this peculiar

scenery. We had also a guide who knew every spot worth seeing; all the short cuts to different points; the hidden glens not generally known or visited; and who, during our summer residence, enabled us to see more than many strangers might have done in double the number of weeks.

The valleys, for the most part running north and south, are charming to the true lover of sylvan scenes; they abound in picturesque beauty, combining all the attractions of wood, pasturage, orchards, clear streams, and occasional glimpses of the sea. One feature is very general and exceedingly ornamental; the trunks of the trees are, without exception, covered with ivy: this adds much to their beauty, even when the trees are in leaf, while in winter it gives a greenness to the otherwise dead landscape most pleasing to the eye. The luxuriance of the ivy here is quite a thing to be remarked; it covers the banks, creeps over the walls, and climbs upon the rocks by the sea-shore. About two miles to the east of St. Helier, there are several elevated rocks, the bases of which are washed at high water, and higher up are entirely overgrown with this evergreen. From the natural outline of these rocks, and their green covering, they have all the appearance of the most picturesque ruins.

While mentioning the points of interest to the

tourist, we must not omit to refer to an elevation called La Hogue Bie, from the summit of which the eye embraces almost the whole island, which appears like an extensive pleasure-ground, beautifully undulating and studded with cottages; fertility on every side is seen extending down to the very water's edge. The fine bays may be clearly traced, and all around the horizon is bounded by the blue sea, excepting where the French coast stretches away in the distance. We can recall few prospects that are more perfect in their peculiar style. The walk to this spot is not more than three miles, and is strewn with attractions every step of the way. In the course of it the tourist passes one of the most interesting of the island churches, by name St. Saviour's, in the churchyard of which one may very well linger awhile in the shade of the trees, and look down from it upon the town and bay of St. Aubin. The hydrangeas in the neighbourhood of La Hogue Bie grow almost as large as shrubs, and we were told that in August and September, when they are covered with their bright blue flowers—forming as they do actual avenues in all the gardens—that the effect is indescribably captivating. La Hogue also is not without its legends.

The old island roads are quite peculiar to this country, and very rarely explored by the traveller; but in order to form any idea of the interior of the island it is absolutely essential that they should be visited, and they will very well repay the trouble. During a day's ramble through them much is seen of Jersey; beautiful vistas are occasionally opened up to feast the eye; quiet sequestered dells are crossed, where one may linger long with nature. These roads were originally made to conduct the inhabitants from the churches to the sea-shore, and they embrace in their windings the farm-houses and other habitations, so that you are led past the orchards and pastures from whence the inhabitants have derived their independence.

In these walks we saw large numbers of the cows, so celebrated all over the world, breeding for export. The abundance of loaded fruit trees, weighed down to the ground with the fruit, which also forms a great article of export, was quite a glorious sight. Some of these old paths were, in the olden time, before the reformation took place, what was called privileged, that is to say, partaking of the nature of a sanctuary; a fact sufficient to prove their very great antiquity. No guide-book that we have met with makes any mention of these roads, which is a great omission, for they show one more of the general character of the country than any of the more frequented routes and paths.

St. Aubin is the town next in importance to St. Helier, its bay forming a very striking feature in all the views that can be obtained of it. There are three modes of reaching it from that town, all of which are agreeable—namely, in a boat if the tide is in, by the regular road, or along the sands; the last, however, is to be preferred, as the sands are very hard and fine, and you have the waves of the sea coming rippling close to your feet, while you can look in no possible direction in which the most lovely views do not meet your eye. The situation of the town is charming; indeed, for a residence, we should prefer it to St. Helier. It

partly skirts the shore and is partly situated on rocky well-wooded heights. There are many good houses in the town quite as eligible as can be found in its more ambitious neighbour; and there are also beautiful villas which add greatly to the charm of the environs. The surrounding country is beautiful; the views over the bay are enchanting. Sheltered by high cliffs, there is seldom any rough or cold wind to annoy even a delicate invalid; all is in harmony, and the luxuriance of the vegetation must be seen to be credited.

Another charming drive takes us from St. Helier to Gorey, passing through a rich, low country, wooded in its immediate vicinity with a beautiful variety of timber. The chief importance of this little town is derived from its oyster fishery, which is, indeed, of great value to the island at large. Upwards of 250 boats are employed in it; and as many as 1500 sailors, besides nearly 1000 persons, women and children, are connected with the fishery. It is said that about 30,000*l.* is annually returned into the island from its produce.

Mont Orgueil castle is one of the most striking and picturesque remains of antiquity that are yet to be met with. Its situation is commanding, standing on the summit of a rocky headland which juts into the sea; the walls are mantled with ivy, which is in fine unison with the grey tints of age that are here and there to be seen, and with the loop-holes and rents that time has made.

We must not omit, in our mention of the numerous attractions of the island, to say a word in praise of its flower gardens. One rarely sees a house or a cottage, not actually in a street, without its garden; and the flowers that adorn them are in most cases singularly lovely. Myrtles of many different varieties thrive here with the greatest luxuriance; the hydrangeas, already alluded to, are constantly to be seen, measuring from eight to twelve feet in circumference, and five in height, with blossoms of that fine bright blue which sends our English gardeners into complete despair, for it is very rarely indeed in England that this capricious plant can be induced to flower any other colour than pink. The figs are quite equal to those of Italy, and the fig-trees are very ornamental, from their peculiarly-shaped leaves and rich dark green tint. The Spanish chestnuts and evergreen oaks are much finer than in England; the carnations are almost fabulously beautiful, so varied and brilliant are their hues; and as to Jersey and Guernsey pears, they are celebrated all over the world; the orchards that produce them are singularly picturesque, being generally situated on some bank with a southern exposure.

The bays form likewise some of the greatest attractions to the visitors of this island; but guide-books are sadly deficient in their mention of them. Those that we consider most worthy of a visit are St. Catherine's, Royel, Boulay, and St. Brelade bays. The very sweetest of them all, however, is Royel, which is rather an inlet, or deep creek, than a bay; and all the features that surround it are calculated to increase its attractions. High cliffs and banks hem it in deep wooded glens are seen branching into the interior; there is a little harbour too, and a few

fishermen's houses scattered on the beach. A long summer's day is not at all too much to devote to this lovely spot. The shores of the bay of St. Brelade are famous, as indeed are all the southern shores, for a small ground rose of the finest colour, emitting all the fragrance of the *rose d'amour*. The church of this parish is the most ancient in the island; and one of the old chapels, which are anterior in the date of their erection to the churches, stands in the churchyard.

No doubt our readers, before we part, would wish to have some idea of a Jersey farm-house. Well, generally, you enter a green shady lane, by which you reach a high wooden gate. On passing it, the farm-house stands on one side, built of stone, and rather solid and ungainly in its appearance. A vine usually covers the front of the building. The interior of the house varies very little from that of English houses; the fire is made of "vraic" (of which we shall say something presently); the inhabitants rarely touch meat, but their favourite food is a kind of soup, peculiar to the island, and not altogether to be despised by a hungry man. Roasted apples and baked pears are always to be found at a Jersey farm-house dinner, and most excellent they are, especially the Chaumontelle pear. Cider is the general beverage; and all country people, of whatever rank, make their own bread. Great quantities of butter are used, and it is invariably excellent. Most of the articles of common clothing, too, are fashioned by the farm people, so that they may be said to live entirely within themselves; and situated as these farm-houses are in the most snug, secluded, and picturesque situations, there is a great idea of happiness and enjoyment suggested by such a primitive mode of life. They keep much later hours than persons of the same rank in life in England, for lights may be seen in a Jersey farm-house as late as eleven o'clock, and even often until midnight. There is nothing that can be called positively national in their dress, and yet there is a difference we might be puzzled to explain, which gives them a peculiar air.

One word, before we conclude, upon what is called the "vraic gathering," which is a usage peculiar to these islands, and therefore deserving of notice. The vraic is a sea-weed, called in French *vareck*; and a busy time is the vraicking season in Jersey. It is fixed by the legislature, and is named twice a year, commencing about the 10th of March and the 20th of July, and lasting each time about ten days. It is from the rocks that the vraic is gathered. When the season begins, those who cannot collect a sufficient supply for themselves, get their neighbours to help them. The parties consist of ten or twelve, and though a season of work, it is also made a time of great gaiety; and truly it is a bustling and a curious scene. During the progress of the gathering at half tide or low water, multitudes of carts and horses, boats and vraickers, cover the beach, the rocks, and the water; and so anxious are they to make the most of their time, that I have seen horses swimming and carts floating, so unwilling are they to be driven away by the inexorable tide. This precious weed is used as manure, whilst in the farm-houses and in the dwellings of the poorer

classes it serves as a substitute for wood and coal. No other fuel being used, its value to the inhabitants may be readily understood.

And now, in conclusion, we will offer a few remarks upon the climate, forming as it does so essential a feature in all inquiries concerning a temporary residence away from home. We have no hesitation in saying, both from personal experience and from the testimony of competent witnesses, that the climate of Jersey is much to be preferred to that of almost any part of England. The mean annual temperature for three years was about 52°; during these three years the thermometer never rose above 83°, nor fell below 28°, and was very rarely as low as the freezing point, which is proved by the plants that grow and flourish all through the winter. It is very rare here to see a flake of snow, or any frost that lasts beyond midday; and there is great equality of temperature during the twenty-four hours. The dews are so extremely heavy on a summer's morning that one might easily believe a slight shower had fallen. On the 5th of January peas have been observed a foot above ground, close to the sea-shore; and at the end of that month, nose-gays of narcissus, jonquils, stocks, mignonette, hyacinth, and myrtle, in flower, may very easily be procured. The result of our observations, which were made with the greatest attention to exactness, is that—whether we consider the great and varied attractions of the scenery, the excellent accommodation to be met with as respects either hotels or more permanent residences, the delights of such a cheap supply of fruits and flowers, the civility and attention you are sure to meet with, the extreme economy that can be practised there without any sensible diminution of comfort, and, finally, the great salubrity and agreeableness of the climate—Jersey has claims to rank very high in the list of our watering-places.

DOWN THE RIVER.

THE phrase, "the port of London," is one which is continually occurring in newspapers, blue-books, commercial dictionaries and statistical documents. To those, however, who from want of opportunity or inclination have not personally explored the world of London which lies below bridge, the full signification of the term cannot by any possibility have been realized. Whoever would form an adequate notion of the port of this vast metropolis, must make a voyage through the Pool, which is divided into three parts, the upper, middle and lower, extending from London-bridge to Limehouse-reach; and he should extend his trip still farther, as far as Blackwall at least, in order to get an adequate notion of the maritime aspect and resources of modern London.

It may be affirmed without exaggeration that London possesses within itself a sea-board, or what is equivalent to a sea-board, of at least ten miles in extent, made up of both banks of the river in its passage from the custom-house stairs to the landing-place at Greenwich. There is in no part of the world besides a stretch of coast of such extent, where a spectacle at all comparable to that which the Thames at this portion of its course

presents is to be found. Starting from London-bridge on the deck of a steamer, a few revolutions of the paddle-wheels plunge us into the depths of a veritable black forest of shipping, towards the aggregation of which all the maritime kingdoms of the earth have contributed their quota. There are gigantic steamers smoking and puffing, getting up their courage for a tussle with the billows of the North sea or the Atlantic, or resting gently on their shadows after having triumphed over them. There are whole fleets of heavy Dutchmen, with their broad round bows, varnished instead of painted, and glittering with the bright brown polish; there are the French traders, loaded with the fruit, the eggs, the merchandise of Gaul; there are Greek ships from the Mediterranean, laden with corn from Egypt or the Black sea; Spanish bottoms with wine, or with the living horned material destined in a day or two to be transformed into the roast beef of old England. There are Americans with cargoes of timber and of flour, Swedes with iron, and Norwegians with deal, and the bottoms of all nations with the material products of all lands. But incomparably more numerous than they all put together are the vessels of our own country, which have made of the whole world a vast reaping-ground, and of the port of London a granary proportionally large for the reception of the rich harvest of the globe.

As we thread our intricate way, at a moderate and careful pace, through the narrow channel left for the passage of vessels up and down between those close packed on either bank, our ears are assailed by a succession of noises characteristic of the scene. One moment it is the roaring of our captain to some self-willed coal-barge a-head, which has strayed into our track, and threatens us with a sudden stoppage or a collision—then it is the rattling crash of some cataract of Wall's-end into a lighter—then it is the shrill cry of the sailor-boy at the mast-head of some tall ship, or the "yo heave-ho!" of the men at the capstan who are warping her into dock, where she will discharge her cargo—then it is a volley of laughter from a party of pleasure-takers in an open boat, who are got into the wake of our steamer, and are enjoying the ups and downs of the surge she leaves behind her. It happens that the tide is coming in, and on the back of the tide comes vessel after vessel, with canvass swelling to the breeze, and hulls deeply submerged in the flood, all crowding to the port of London to surrender their costly burdens to the demands of the market.

We have now left London behind us, and are coasting along the Isle of Dogs, a district which was once, if all stories be true, of very doubtful repute. It is said to derive its name from having at one period, when the palace at Greenwich on the opposite coast was a royal residence, been the site of the kennel of the royal hounds; but there is a rival etymology which connects the place with a murder, or supposed murder, said to have been discovered by a dog. It is not, properly speaking, an island, although the construction of the canal of the West India Dock, which cuts it across from Limehouse to Blackwall, has made it so. Twenty-five years ago it was a desolate and neglected spot, in bad odour from its known unhealthiness, and in worse condition. The manufac-

turing and maritime necessities of the metropolis have, however, by degrees converted it into an immense, a busy, and a prosperous colony of industrial enterprise. Extensive chemical works have been erected upon it, which give employment to large numbers of people; it was found, moreover, that the site was unusually advantageous for ship-building, the depth of the water being very considerable even close in shore, and the position favourable for the carriage of the materials required. During recent years, numbers of large iron steamers have been built on this once despised and neglected spot; and at the present moment we see as we sail past an extensive building-yard close upon the margin of the stream, the monster frame-work of an ark of iron, which, according to report, is to be about double the size of the huge "Himalaya," and to carry a burden of some ten thousand tons. Such a floating citadel as this will be when completed would be utterly unmanageable without the power of steam, the application of which to the purposes of navigation has, within the memory of most of us, inaugurated a series of experiments the results of which it is impossible even yet to foresee.

But hark! there is a heavy, regular beat upon the surface of the water, the deep dull sound of which completely overcomes the fuss and splutter of our little craft, and we turn our glance down the stream to see what is coming. It is an Ostend steamer, standing high out of the water, and thrashing her way towards the Custom-house, opposite to which, in some half-hour's time, she will cast anchor. As she flits past us, and hurries us for a moment in the gloom of her broad shadow, she turns off half her steam, as a precaution against doing damage in the pool by collision with smaller craft, or the upsetting of boats or lighters. She is hardly a furlong distant when, swift as an arrow, comes a Gravesend boat into view; the lively dash of her paddles is mingled with a livelier strain of music which proceeds from her deck, every square foot of which is densely packed over with a mass of living faces, all smiling in the sun, and a whole row of them of an undeniable emerald green colour by reflection from the bright paint of her paddle-boxes. The sound of harp and violin and mellow horn is borne towards us on the breeze, as she stretches away on her course at the top of her speed. Suddenly she is blotted from view by the apparition of a very different denizen of the waters; this is a hay-barge, her thwarts almost level with the water, and her cargo of new-mown hay, smelling like a Devonshire meadow, rising seven or eight feet above the deck. Her sails are of all colours except those of the rainbow; black and brown and dingy brick-dust red, pitchy and seamy and ragged, and patched in fifty places at least, and every patch presenting a new variety of tint. All the crew we can see is a man at the helm and a boy on the top of what we suppose must be called the haystack, unless we are to take into the account a woman, in a mob cap not of the cleanest, who, peeping now and then out of the little cabin door in the stern, is busy in paring of potatoes and dropping them into a saucepan. We have not time to speculate on the possible details of the domestic establishment over which a woman in

such circumstances is called upon to preside, for lo! a royal-looking bark with three tall masts, against which a broad expanse of sail flaps idly, looms into the foreground. On her upper deck, which rises far above the water, a squad of sickly-seeming soldiers, whom we set down at once for invalided veterans from the East Indies, are looking listlessly over the side. Brown, jaundiced-looking Lascars are clambering among the yards, and the captain, by whom stands a grey-whiskered, weather-beaten pilot, is bawling to them in a dialect which we can't understand, through a black and battered tin trumpet. She is gone, and then dashes by a steam-tug, a dirty drab of a water-sprite, all smoke and tar and filth, who evidently cares not a straw for appearances, and has not the slightest regard for any fashion whatever save the fashion of making money—she is off like a rocket, leaving like a rocket a tail of sparks behind her, bound for the Nore or thereabouts, whence she is going to tug home the "Bungumshaw" Bengal trader, and lodge her in the East India docks. Is it fancy? or do we smell rum? as the "Blue Mountain," from Jamaica, heaves alongside of us. Straw hats with roomy rims seem very much the fashion on board; even the negro cook wears one. An enormous brawny fellow he is, with shoulders like an Atlas, and a mouth like the post-box at St. Martin's-le-grand. The crew are busy on board in scrubbing, cleansing and sluicing the decks, and Sambo draws the water with a rope and pail which seems the merest trifle in his hands.

But here we are at Blackwall, where we mean to step ashore, and return home by rail. The train carries us past the West India docks, the most extensive and the best constructed docks in the whole world; and we are reminded that to form a just idea of the port of London, the stranger should visit the various docks as well as voyage through the Pool. This exploration we must defer to a future opportunity. The port of London has been sung by an anonymous bard in a sounding sonnet which will be new to most of our readers, and with it we will close the present article.

Did we, as they of old, our gods attend
With festive pomp, before the city's view,
COMMERCE! adown this watery avenue
At each returning feast thy train should wend,
With richer circumstance than e'er did send
Athenian Pallas forth, or to the dome
Of favourite Jove,* amidst applauding Rome,
Proceed with trophies, treasures without end,
Less pomp and homage this than should be thine,
Borne in thy sumptuous bark these ranks between,
Where from all winds thy votaries combine,
Centring all skill, all enterprise:—a scene
More wondrous far than did her progress line
When Cydnus' wave received th' Egyptian queen.

It is an undoubted truth, though little believed, that to be charitable to the poor, and to be free and generous in the support of religion, and any good work, is the surest and safest way of thriving.

Those that starve their religion, either they are poor, or are in a fair way to be so.

It becomes Christians to be open-hearted and open-handed, and in every good work to sow plentifully, as those on whom God hath sowed plentifully, and that hope to reap so.

* Jupiter Capitolinus.

A PREACHER A HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

ONE Sunday afternoon, some months ago, we were attracted to Finsbury Chapel, Moorfields, by the intimation that an aged minister, who had attained his 108th year, was to address the children of the catechetical seminary in connection with that place of worship. At the hour appointed we entered the chapel, which is one of the largest in London. The spacious galleries, it is true, were vacant; but a vast body of orderly children of various classes of society occupied the ground-floor of the commodious edifice.

After a few minutes' waiting, Dr. Fletcher and two or three friends entered the chapel, and took up their position at the desk of the precentor. Then the mighty building resounded with a song of praise from a multitude of infant voices. The impressions of that solemn moment must have been deep; we trust they may be permanent! The hymn being ended, every eye seemed directed towards the little circle of adults which surrounded the venerable pastor, in search of the still more venerable man who was twice his age. But there appeared no one whose exterior indicated that his life had been protracted to so unusual a period. The reverend doctor offered up a brief and paternal prayer, in which he solemnly commended the young ones before him, and their aged friend, to the God of grace. Then he introduced his namesake, though not kinsman, the venerable gentleman who was to address us, Mr. George Fletcher.

The centenarian in question was a tall, muscular man, who had at one time evidently possessed great physical strength. His once powerful frame had been but slightly bowed by the vicissitudes of more than a century, and his hair was only just beginning to whiten. His voice was still good, for he was heard by every one present, though it must have lost very much of that power and volume which it once possessed. At first it was somewhat tremulous; but as the preacher warmed with his subject, it became clear and firm to a degree quite surprising under all the circumstances. The matter of his address was most unexceptionable and every way appropriate. He selected for his theme the Great Salvation, the fulness, freeness, and necessity of which he abundantly demonstrated, in clear and forcible language; in a style so simple that his juvenile auditory could not fail to comprehend all he said, and in a manner so impressive that many of the great truths to which he gave utterance will probably be indelibly inscribed on the youthful minds who were then before him. He urged with great solemnity the beauty of holiness, and the peculiar blessings which attend those who embrace religion in early life, reminding his juvenile hearers, in the beautiful words of the poet, that

"A flower when offered in the bud
Is no vain sacrifice."

His address was protracted over a period almost sufficient for an ordinary sermon, and he sat down comparatively but little exhausted with his energetic exertions. One could not help mentally wandering hither and thither, on listening to the aged speaker, and taking a long-drawn glance

in retrospect to the date when the venerable man before us was even as one of his present auditory—a child in the hey-day of youth, but little thinking of the toils and troubles which awaited him in after days; and, above all, never dreaming that his life would be so wondrously protracted.

The aged speaker was born in February, 1747, and was consequently over 107 years of age. The period of his birth carries us back to the times in which Westminster bridge was built, and Eddystone lighthouse was completed by Smeaton. The country was just recovering from war, both at home and abroad, and had begun to wear an aspect of comfort, security, and prosperity. When our preacher was only nine years old, the tragedy of the black hole at Calcutta, and its attendant circumstances, gradually led to decisive operations in the East, by which millions of the benighted worshippers of idols have been brought under the influence of Britain and of Christianity. At home the social picture was anything but hopeful; amidst temporal prosperity there was the licentiousness depicted in Hogarth's "Gin Lane," and evidenced by the sign which Smollett says was common at the alehouses of his day: "Here you may get drunk for a penny, dead drunk for twopence, and have clean straw for nothing."

Such were the times in which this venerable preacher came forth into life; but, happily, he took the surest means to escape the general contamination. By the grace of God he was brought to embrace religion in very early youth; and when the general licentiousness of the age called forth those mighty evangelists, John Wesley and George Whitfield, he speedily made their acquaintance, and has ever since profited by the hallowed influences which occasional hours in their society afforded. He accompanied them many miles in their rural peregrinations, and stood by them as they preached by the road-side, at the market cross, on the village green, in the barn, or the farmhouse kitchen. With them he endured persecutions of every kind. Stones, eggs, and offensive missiles of different sorts, were frequently showered upon them; and more than once they experienced blows of a very painful nature from their ruthless and relentless persecutors.

Mr. Fletcher's father was married early, and had three wives. By his first he had five children; by his second two, of whom Mr. Fletcher was one; and by his third he had either eighteen or twenty; the old man's memory would not serve him as to which was the accurate number. The retrospect seemed painful to him. "Alas!" said the aged man, "I was early an orphan; but God has been my father, my mother, my sister, and my brother. I have known, by the actual experience of over a hundred years, that godliness is profitable for the life which now is, and I am unshaken in my faith that it is profitable for that which is to come."

What names, and dates, and deeds rush through the troubled memory as one looks back to the times which this old man, who is still amongst us, has witnessed! His youth was passed in the reign of George II.; he lived through the lengthened reign of George III., as well as those of George IV. and William IV., while he has seen seventeen years of her present majesty's reign! He has thus lived under five different sovereigns in his native

land! He lived to see the birth, boyhood, rise, progress, splendour, defeat, fall, and death in miserable exile, of Napoleon the great. He saw the restoration in France of the Bourbons, their expulsion, the accession of Louis Philippe; and now he sees a Napoleon again upon the throne of France; and, after a long extended animosity, he beholds the two great nations united in defence of a weaker neighbour from the Spoiler of the North! He saw the rise of our transatlantic colonies; and before he had reached his twentieth year they had a population of 2,000,000, when the famous "Stamp Act" passed. As for Australia, in his youth it was all but unknown. He was of an age to appreciate the eloquence of Pitt, the elder and younger, and the withering sarcasm of the mysterious Junius; he read in the newspapers of the day the speeches of lord North, the duke of Grafton, Burke, and Fox. He was a contemporary of Franklin, Warren Hastings, and the great and generous Washington. He breathed the breath of heaven with these men, looked upon the sun at the same time, was excited or depressed by the same events! But they are gone, and have become but portions of history, while he still remains amongst us! He took part in the American war, having at an early age entered the service of his country, but in the direful contest he was providentially spared. In Egypt and Spain he was also engaged, at the opening of the present century, and for his services there he now wears a medal, and receives a pension. He was in the Foot-guards, and in that service he met with many

"Most disastrous chances

Of moving accidents by flood and field;

Of hair-breadth 'scapes 'n the imminent deadly breach."

But it pleased a gracious Providence to ward off danger; he "wore a charmed life." On one occasion a heavy fire was poured by the enemy into the line in which he was fighting; thirteen men fell dead close by him, while many others were wounded; yet he escaped! One morning, during a sharp engagement, he fought in the midst of the battle, and *five thousand* were slain around him without his having a single wound himself! Once he happened to turn round slightly, and that instant a random shot took away the flowing locks from one side of his head without even grazing his skin; in fact, he suffered nothing beyond the fearful shock. Had he not turned his head he would have received the ball full in his face, and must of course have been instantaneously destroyed. What *caused* him to turn his head, and thus be spared? Was it that nonentity which is designated "chance?" or was it not rather a special providence, which, by this simple but unaccountable movement, preserved him for fifty-four years longer, to proclaim the glad tidings of the gospel of peace? During a temporary halt, when, after a sharp and protracted skirmish, he was with a number of his fellow soldiers lying stretched at rest upon the ground, he saw an old chair which had lost its back. He got up and placed it against a tree close by, that he might have something to rest his back against. The trunk of the tree was between him and the enemy; he had not been sitting there long when a large cannon shot came along, carried away the tree,

and the very legs of the chair on which he sat. Such was the force of the shock, that not only were the tree and chair borne along, but the poor affrighted soldier was cast into a ditch close by. This time he was badly bruised, but nothing more. He stood by sir Ralph Abercrombie during a deadly fire, and saw three horses successively shot under that gallant officer before he fell. Mr. Fletcher remained for a little time in the East, after hostilities had ceased, to assist some officers in the removal of Egyptian antiquities for the British Museum. He was discharged from the army in 1803, which is fifty-one years ago, having served his country for twenty-five years and eight months in Egypt, Spain, Holland, and America.

He often, we are told, preached and prayed with his comrades, and amongst the many curious places to which they had recourse for safety, one of the most singular was the bottom of a large dry well. He has been a Methodist class-leader eighty years.

Amongst those whom he remembers, but who have long since gone to their rest, were Rowland Hill and Matthew Wilks, two very eccentric but exceedingly useful men in their day and generation. With these two servants of God, the pastors of the two largest dissenting congregations in the metropolis, the former at Surrey chapel, and the latter at Whitfield's old Tabernacle, Moorfields, the venerable preacher was intimately acquainted. Speaking of his acquaintance with the Wesleys and Whitfield, he was naturally led to speak of Adam Clarke, the commentator, of whom he was an ardent admirer, having walked miles to hear him preach. He remembers the reverend doctor's first sermon, he said—probably he meant his first sermon in London—and it made a deep impression upon him. The doctor was a young man, and his ministrations were characterized by all that earnestness and energy which were the prominent features of the Wesleyan oratory of those times. Having announced his text, he plunged at once *in medias res*. "What have I come here for to-night, dear hearers?" he asked, and paused as if for a reply. "I have come to tell the rich that their riches won't save them, and the poor that their poverty won't save them; the learned that their learning will be of no avail in the great day of account, and the ignorant that their ignorance will be no excuse for them then. I have come to tell you all, rich and poor, young and old, great and small, learned and illiterate, that there is one way for you all, and that one way must be taken by you all, or you all will be alike subject to everlasting condemnation!" In this way, said the old man, did Dr. Adam Clarke deliver his first discourse; and long before he closed his observations, there was hardly a tearless eye in the whole of that vast congregation!

These were days of an eminently stirring character—days such as those which, after a lengthened peace, appear again to be dawning on the political horizon. Our aged friend remembers those great events, the first French revolution, the battle of Trafalgar, the Walcheren expedition, the Peninsular war, the retirement of Napoleon to Elba, his reappearance and recovery of the throne of France, his desperate efforts in self-defence, his final overthrow at Waterloo, his exile

in St. Helena; and yet the old man has lived thirty-three years after Napoleon's death, a period which alone comprises the whole life of thousands and tens of thousands!

So much for what he has seen of war. Coming to the arts of peace, we may notice, that he witnessed the rise and development of gas-lighting, which has now grown into a complicated science, and is extended to every petty town throughout the country, although our aged friend had reached his manhood while gas was yet unknown. He was sixty-four years of age when the "Comet" steamer started, the first which plied for hire, in 1811. He was sixty-nine when the "Safety Lamp" first facilitated mining operations, and doubtless became the means of saving many valuable lives. He was fifty-four years of age when the first official enumeration of the people took place in 1801, since which work we have regularly had a decennial census. Mail-coaches, canals, railways, and the electric telegraph date their rise, also, within his life-time. Our aged friend, too, saw the progress and happy success of the slavery question. Peel and Daniel O'Connell fill up a comparatively small portion of this old man's extended life. The fact is, great and brilliant names and events rattle through the memory while we look at him, like the variegated atoms which make up the pleasing *tout ensemble* of the kaleidoscope. They appear and shine but for a moment, and then are gone for ever! Here, for instance, is a string of pearls, each of which glistened briefly throughout some portion of the old man's life—Sir Joshua Reynolds, West, Fuseli, and Flaxman; sir Joseph Banks, sir William Herschell, sir Humphrey Davy, and Dr. Jenner; Paley, Dr. Adam Clarke, Grattan, and lord Erskine; lord Byron, Robert Bloomfield, Rennie, the engineer; Wilberforce, sir J. Mackintosh, Jeremy Bentham, sir Walter Scott, Crabbe, Coleridge, Hogg, Talford, Mrs. Hemans, Sadler, Malthus, Dr. Carey, and Dr. Morrison. All these were born, became famous, and died, within the space of this old man's life-time, and he still lives.

A moment's retrospect at this old man's life suggests some solemn and weighty considerations. He rose into existence debarred of the comforts of the domestic circle, and has seen his parents, and his nearly thirty brothers and sisters, with many of their descendants, go down into the silent grave! The friends whom he made amongst his companions in arms are gone. His fellow-labourers in the propagation of the gospel are also gone. A man at a hundred years of age can hardly make new friendships. He has seen his acquaintances and connections depart one by one into another world. Ah! what recollections of once familiar faces must fill his mind as he muses in his old arm chair! The life of man is like unto a mighty ship. The little child may be compared to the keel laid down. The form of the vessel gradually develops itself. At manhood's prime the hull may be said to be completed. But nothing is stationary. Planks are cleared away; supports begin to be removed; and preparations for the great day of the launch are gradually made. Support after support is taken away; cord after cord which held the mighty fabric to the land is cast off; till at last the vast body is kept by the

brittle thread of a single rope! the only tie which binds it to the land, and prevents it from plunging into a new state of being. In our friend's case this last lingering rope has not been cut, but has remained in a wondrous state of preservation, and held him on to this probationary stage of our existence; but even though it may now escape being severed by accident, to which all are so liable, the day must come, and that, in all human probability, speedily, when the natural decay of humanity will snap the last retaining thread, and an entrance will be made into the mysteries of that future which awaits all the living. May it be with him the "abundant entrance," and the full reward.

The last words he uttered to the writer, at a recent interview, were, "Good-bye! God bless you! Remember the one thing needful!" Such, dear reader, is our parting counsel to you. In his lengthened career, our venerable friend has seen mutability stamped on almost every earthly object. Dynasties have been overthrown. Emperors, whose dominion seemed immovable, have been dethroned. The landmarks of old countries have been altered. New nations have been born. Public celebrities, that once filled the eye and ear of the world, have become forgotten. Opinions and dogmas that once seemed beyond the power of being disputed, have been exploded. War, commerce, science, art, all have been revolutionized and made to assume new shapes. One thing only remains unchanged. The religion which he embraced in his youth continues as important now as then. Amidst the wreck of all once thought stable, the solemnities of eternity still retain their magnitude undiminished. The "one thing needful" is as all-important in the year 1854, when he preached before us, as it was in the year 1747, when he first came upon the stage of time.

THE CZAR'S BAND.

ST. PETERSBURG has several Musical Clubs, and its Phil-harmonic Society. A modern tourist speaks in the most enthusiastic terms of a celebrated corps of vocal performers, which belong to the Imperial household, called *les Chantres de la Court*; we quote his own description of the effect produced upon himself by one of their performances. "I feel it impossible accurately to convey an idea of the various impressions and emotions which this most skilful arrangement of select voices, of all ages, and consequently of all tones, singing sacred music, of rich, full, and expressive beauty, is capable of exciting in the bosom of the auditor. One feels for a moment transported with ecstacy at the sublime effect of such heavenly strains, the very heart-strings seem touched by them, and sensibility is awakened to a degree which operatic music cannot produce.

"The whole is a most masterly performance, and the result may be quoted as the triumph of the human voice over every other instrument. From the most delightful soprano down to the gravest baritone, every key note is sung at the imperial chapel, by a chorus of one hundred and twenty performers, educated from the age of five years for this sole and sacred choral service. A

fugue usually sung in the Russian churches at the Resurrection, accompanied by full choruses, was performed among other pieces, and displayed such skill in the composition, that I felt riveted to the spot. One of the finest tenor voices I ever heard bore a conspicuous part in it, and the loud swell of the bass, contrasting with the flexible and silvery voices of the children, all singing with a degree of precision that could scarcely be equalled by a mechanical instrument, formed such a concord of sweet sounds, that no persons present could help being affected. Certainly, until I heard this unique performance, I was not aware of all the harmony of which the human voice is capable. The most renowned chorus singers of church music in Europe really sink into insignificance, compared to these minstrels. A *pater noster* was sung by them on this occasion, which struck me as by far the most affecting composition I ever heard. There was a *crescendo* towards the end, which was quite irresistible, and the effect of it on the audience was plainly visible on all that were in the room." Our author adds, that when Madame Catalani heard the *Chantres de la Court*, she confessed to those near her, that until then she had no idea of the effect which can be produced by a chorus of voices, although she had heard the celebrated choristers of the Pope's chapel. Bortniansky ranks highest as a composer of sacred music, and is esteemed as the Russian Handel. His productions are very numerous.

"The imperial court possess another unique and extraordinary band of performers; these may be said to belong to the court, though they play occasionally on the public promenades. It consists of nearly forty performers, who play upon a very primitive kind of straight horns, each performer sounding only the particular note set down for him. It was, we believe, the invention of a Bohemian musician, named Maresch, and the effect of the music played by them is particularly striking."

AN OINTING WITH OIL.

PROFESSOR SIMPSON, of Edinburgh, has been the means of bringing to light a curious corroboration of the sanitary value of the ancient practice of anointing with oil. It appears that the learned professor, when visiting the manufacturing town of Galashiels, was casually informed that the workers in the wool mill in that place were exempt from the attacks of consumption and scrofula. On inquiring of the medical men in the vicinity, the truth of the statement was confirmed, and it was then deemed expedient to pursue investigations on a broader scale. Communications were accordingly sent to physicians, residing in Dunfermline, Alloa, Tillicoultry, Inverness, and other districts, where wool mills are in operation; and in the case of all it was ascertained that similar immunity was enjoyed from the fatal diseases mentioned. It further appeared that in some of the localities scarlatina had been added to the list; and also, that employment in the mills not only preserved the health, but children of delicate constitutions were sent to the wool workers for the express purpose of acquiring strength, a result in almost every instance attained.

Varieties.

THE HOURS MOST FATAL TO LIFE.—We have ourselves ascertained the hour of death in 2880 instances of all ages, and have arrived at interesting conclusions. We may remark that the population from which the data are derived is a mixed population in every respect, and that the deaths occurred during a period of several years. If the deaths of the 2880 persons had occurred indifferently at any hour during the twenty-four, 120 would have occurred at each hour. But this was by no means the case. There are two hours in which the proportion was remarkably below this, two *minima* in fact, namely, from midnight to one o'clock, when the deaths were 53 per cent. below the average, and from noon to one o'clock, when they were 20½ per cent. below. From three to six o'clock, A.M., inclusive, and from three to seven o'clock, P.M., there is a gradual increase; in the former of 23½ per cent. above the average, in the latter of 5½ per cent. The *maximum* of deaths is from five to six o'clock, A.M., when it is 40 per cent. above the average; the next, during the hour before midnight, when it is 25 per cent. in excess; a third hour of excess is that from nine to ten o'clock in the morning, being 17½ per cent. above the average. From ten, A.M., to three o'clock, P.M., the deaths are less numerous, being 16½ per cent. below the average, the hour before noon being the most fatal. From three o'clock, P.M., to seven, P.M., the deaths rise to 5½ per cent. above the average, and then fall from that hour to eleven, P.M., averaging 6½ per cent. below the mean. During the hours from nine to eleven in the evening there is a *minimum* of 6½ per cent. below the average. Thus, the least mortality is during the mid-day hours, namely, from ten to three o'clock; the greatest during early morning hours, from three to six o'clock. About one-third of the total deaths noted were children under five years of age, and they show the influence of the latter still more strikingly. At all the hours from ten in the morning until midnight the deaths are at or below the mean; the hours from ten to eleven, A.M., four to five, P.M., and nine to ten, P.M., being *minima*, but the hour after midnight being the lowest *maximum*: at all the hours from two to ten, A.M., the deaths are above the mean, attaining their *maximum* at from five to six, P.M., when it is 45½ per cent. above.—*The London Quarterly Review*.

ANCIENT ANTIQUITIES.—Nineveh was 15 miles long, and 40 round, with walls 100 feet high, and thick enough for three chariots.—Babylon was 60 miles within the walls, which were 75 feet thick and 300 high, with 100 brazen gates.—The temple of Diana at Ephesus was 425 feet high. It was 200 years in building.—The largest of the pyramids is 481 feet high, and 763 feet on the sides; its base covers 13 acres. The stones are about 30 feet in length, and the layers are 206: 100,000 men were employed in its erection.—About the 1590th part of the Great Pyramid of Egypt is occupied by chambers and passages; all the rest is solid masonry.—The labyrinth of Egypt contains 3000 chambers and 12 halls.—Thebes, in Egypt, presents ruins 27 miles round. It has 100 gates.—Carthage was 25 miles round.—Athens was 25 miles round, and contained 25,000 citizens, and 400,000 slaves.—The temple of Delphos was so rich in donations, that it was once plundered of 10,000*l.* sterling; and Nero carried from it 500 statues.—The walls of Rome were 13 miles in extent.—*Newspaper paragraph*.

DISGRACEFUL AMUSEMENT.—In the disgraceful and paltry war of the Fronde, in the minority of Louis XIV of France, the prince of Condé and the cardinal de Retz, leaders of the opposing factions, during a short truce went together to view the curious garden of an old hermit, famous as a florist. They amused themselves by keeping him attentive to their discourse while they trod to pieces his best flowers on each side of the path. He soon discovered their plan, and shaking his grey locks, cried, "Alas! alas! how much were it to be wished that you could agree in plans to relieve your distressed country with the same readiness which you show in joining to persecute a helpless solitary."

CHANGE OF NAMES.—Towards the middle of the fifteenth century it became the fashion among the wits and learned men, particularly in Italy, to change their baptismal names for classic ones. Among the rest Platina, the historian at Rome, calling together his friends, took the name of Callimachus, instead of Phillip. Pope Paul II, who reigned about that time, unluckily for the historian, chanced to be suspicious and illiterate. He had no idea that people could wish to alter their names unless they had some bad design, and actually scrupled not to employ imprisonment and other violent methods to discover the fancied mystery. Platina was most cruelly tortured on this frivolous account. He had nothing to confess: so the Pope, after endeavouring in vain to convict him of heresy and sedition, released him after a long imprisonment.

IGNORANCE OF THE FATHER OF FREDERICK THE GREAT.—The ignorance of Frederick William of Prussia was more than remarkable. His written as well as his spoken language was a jargon compounded of high German and low German, French and Latin, which set at defiance all rules of grammar, and betrayed an utter disregard of orthography. His majesty directed that his son, afterwards Frederick the Great, should not be taught Latin. One day his tutor wished the prince to translate a passage from the law of the Roman empire, called the Golden Bull. The king came in, and hearing some Latin words, said, "What are you about, fellow, with my son?" "Your majesty, I am explaining to him the Aurea Bulla." The king, lifting up his cane, his invariable companion, with which he struck every one who offended him, rejoined, "I'll Aurea Bulla you, you scoundrel," and so put an end to the prince's Latin.

MILITARY ANECDOTE OF THE LATE LORD SALTOUN.—Lord Saltoun was with his regiment, in 1815, at Quatre Bras, on the 16th of June, where the Guards were engaged. At the crowning field of Waterloo, on the 18th of June, he and his fellow-countryman, colonel Macdonnell, commanded the all-important post of Hougoumont, on the right of the British army, and held it all day against the overwhelming numbers of the French host, colonel Macdonnell within and lord Saltoun without. Towards the close of that eventful day he returned to his place in the line, with but about one-third of the men with whom he had gone into action. He now took a prominent part in the last celebrated charge of the Guards. One short anecdote of this moment of his career will at once depict the character of the man, and the regard which the officers and the love which his men bore for him. Volunteering to go to the front some twenty or thirty paces, while the battalion was lying down, and the last column of the French army, some 10,000 strong, was coming on to endeavour to break the British line and retrieve the day, he arranged that he would put his cap on his sword as a signal when the men were to get up and fire. Utterly regardless of himself, and seeing the advantage of allowing the French column to approach to within certain destruction, he waited till they were so near that his brother officers and friends called out to him—"Come back, Saltoun—our own men must shoot you;" on which there was a general cheer from right to left, "Never fear; we won't shoot my lord."—*Edinburgh Courant*.

ORIGIN OF A POPULAR BOOK.—A very accomplished young lady, residing with her father in the country, who was considerably reduced in circumstances, made up her mind that she must do one of two things: work as a seamstress, or become an author! She preferred the latter, and composed a little work, which had only a partial success; but she gathered courage even from that. Her second work, "The Wide, Wide World," was produced, and placed in the hands of the publisher, who gave her, conditionally, a very liberal contract; but the sale was slow for some months, and a loss appeared inevitable. Suddenly, however, public opinion decided in favour of the work, and Mr. Putnam has had the happiness of disposing of twenty thousand copies, and paying over to the clever and intelligent authoress several thousand dollars. Her third work is now announced.—*Boston Evening Post*.